

## Minnesota State Tournament Coverage

### Red Fails to Peak Against Valley Again

By Greg Schmidt

August 9, 2005

Fourth-ranked Apple Valley (29-14) continued its grand stage dominance over the Red Aug. 4 with a 10-0, seven-inning decision in the first round of the state tournament at Faber Field.

However, unlike the previous two meetings that were also defeats, the Red (16-13 in the 1998 first round and 8-2 in the 2002 losers' bracket) was unable to launch any type of rally.

"Everything that possibly could have gone right for us went right for us and everything that could go wrong for Tri-City went wrong for them," said 76ers coach Bruce Young. "Everything went in our favor."

And the favors erupted early as the 76ers went right to work against the Red's top winner this summer, Sam Weber (9-3), by crossing home plate four times in the first inning. "Everything was going for them . . . We definitely played one of our worst games," said Red first baseman Adam Weber. "Us not being able to hit the ball and them coming up with big hits."

A new pitcher in the second provided a brief respite from the carnage, but in the third the 76ers blew it open with a three-run wind-aided blast to right field by Kyle Gold. The last time a shot like that was witnessed by long-time Red fans at Faber Field was the game-winning round tripper by their very own Brad Bornhorst at the 1999 state tournament in a come-from-behind win against Richfield in their third losers' bracket game.

"There would be no such heroics for the Red (37-9) on this day. Even base hits were hard to come by against Apple Valley's Allen Bechstein.

"Through [the summer] he's pitched like that . . . he has a real nice presence on the mound," said Young. "I don't remember a game this year out of those, maybe 10 games that he's pitched, where he hasn't had that." It's not like the Red didn't put the ball in play, but Bechstein had a knack for prompting the Red batters to put the ball into waiting gloves.

Young agreed: "Yeah, a couple of Tri-City kids hit ropes, but they were right at people." Bechstein (7-2, 1.49), a senior at Eastview this fall, is getting looks from several colleges according to Young, who also has two pitchers on the roster, Tom Buske and Chuck Lukanen, that are headed to the University of Minnesota. Buske ended the Red's season in 2002 with a complete game effort. In this contest he went 3 for 4 with a walk.

Said Larsen: "We just didn't score the runs." None of the five Red hits were in the same inning and only one went for extra bases: a one-out double by Joe Colwell in the second. Chase Traeger, Billy Gazich, Brady Field and Evan Eid each singled.

**State tournament first round Aug. 4 (Game 46)  
Apple Valley 10, Tri-City Red 0, 7 inn.**

<b>Apple Valley</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Tri-City Red</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

**Bechstein and Carlson; S. Weber, Porten (2), Rosin (5), Ries (6), Cleveringa (7) and Field. W-Bechstein (7-2). L-S. Weber (9-3). HR, AV, Gold (1).**

## **Northern Exposure Burns Red in Losers' Bracket**

### **State appearance quickest in team history**

By Greg Schmidt

August 9, 2005

A superb pitching performance wasn't enough to keep fifth-ranked Tri-City Red afloat in the Legion state tournament as their inexplicable hitting drought continued into the losers' bracket. That led to a season-ending 3-2 loss to 14<sup>th</sup> ranked Duluth Lakeview Aug. 4 at Faber Field in St. Cloud.

Adam Weber, in possibly his final start for the Red after verbally committing to the University of Minnesota on a football scholarship days earlier, was exceptional again, blanking Duluth (21-12) for the first six innings on one hit. But in the eighth a 2-1 advantage crumbled as Duluth tied it with a triple and went ahead on a chopper down the leftfield line by Mike Mahoney, who had led off the previous inning with a homer to right field. That erased the hard fought lead the Red gained on a two-out infield single by Evan Eid (1 for 3, RBI) in the second and triple to the left-center track from Derek McCallum (1 for 3, 3B, RBI) in the sixth, also with two out.

The Red notched only two base runners after that: a leadoff walk to Adam Weber (0 for 2, BB, SB) in the seventh and leadoff single by Blake Searles (1 for 3) in the eighth. Billy Gazich (1 for 4) and Justin Hemauer (1 for 3, BB, SB) accounted for the Red's remaining two hits. Weber and Duluth's Josh Gow both struck out 10 and each went the distance. "I thought Adam pitched a heckuva game," said Red manager Jeff Larsen.

It was the Red's power outage that proved most unsettling. After belting out 55 hits in their three district playoff games, the squad tallied only 10 in two state games and only two arrived in the same inning.

"We couldn't string the hits and if you're in the losers' bracket you gotta hit," Larsen said. Luck also was lacking for the Red. "We didn't get any breaks, but at the same time we didn't make any. I told the kids they don't have to be ashamed of anything. They had

a good year,” said Larsen. He continued: “It’s just unfortunate we couldn’t put a better show on . . . But at the end of the season only one team is going to be standing anyway.”

The hope, of course, is that next year the last team standing is Tri-City Red. Of the 16 teams in the tourney, the Red (37-10) was among the two or three youngest squads. On the 18-man roster, 13 are eligible to return.

“We’re not a senior-laded team. We got some good experience in these younger pitchers and we’ve got some others with the potential to come in and help us.”

The two game set was the Red’s quickest in team history. Their last state title was in 2000 — at Duluth. In 2003 and ’04 they were knocked out in three games and in ’02 they went four games before bowing out. The Red missed the ’01 tourney after being upset in the district playoffs.

This year’s state berth is their 10<sup>th</sup> in the last 13 seasons. They’ve captured five state titles over that span and two regional titles (’97 and ’99) along with their World Series title in ’99. The Red had been the last two to capture back-to-back titles until this year, as Eden Prairie again beat Woodbury Blue in the championship game. The Rochester A’s finished third and Bloomington Blue took fourth. Apple Valley ended up fifth.

**State tournament Losers’ bracket Aug. 4 (Game 47)  
Duluth Lakeview 3, Tri-City Red 2**

<b>Tri-City Red</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Duluth Lakeview</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**A. Weber and Moen, Field (8); Gow and Hockett. W-Gow (5-3). L-A. Weber (7-1). HR-DLV, Mahoney (2).**